Complimentary Rail Passes

†*89. SHRI RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the categories of complimentary passes issued by the Ministry of Railways;

(b) the number of such passes issued by the Minister of Railways and the Minister of State in the Ministry of the previous Government, alongwith categories thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that inspite of announcement by the Minister of Railways in the present Government to the effect that no passes will be issued, the same are being issued by the Ministry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the policy of government in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE):

(a) to (d) As per the schemes in vogue at present, Complimentary card/cheque passes are issued to the following categories:

I. Card Passes:

(1) Freedom Fighters.

(2) Arjuna Awardees/Olympic Medalists/ Asian & Commonwealth Gold Medalists/ Dronacharya Awardees.

(3) Winners of Chakra series Gallantry Awards (Defence)

(4) Winners of President's Police Medal For Gallantry & Police Medal for Gallantry (Police).

(5) Presidents/Secretaries of National Sports Federations of India, Indian Olympic Association and State Olympic Association and State Olympic Associations affiliated to Indian Olympic Association.

(6) Ex. MRs/MOS(R)s/DMRs.

(7) Non-official Members of Hindi Salahakar Samiti.

(8) Eminent persons/Organisations engaged in social/cultural/educational/sports/ welfare activities & others on medical grounds, etc. under the discretionary powers of Minister for Railways.

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†Original notice of the Question received in Hindi.

II. Cheque Passes:

Complimentary single journey (to and fro) passes known as Cheque Passes are issued to:

(1) Licensed Porters.

(2) Individuals and organisations engaged in social, cultural, educational, sports and welfare activities under the discretionary powers of Minister for Railways, Minister of State for Railways & Railway Board, as per guidelines evolved by the Ministry of Railways.

Under their discretionary powers, 414 Complimentary card passes & 50 Cheque passes were issued by the then Minister for Railways & 5 Complimentary card passes & 405 Complimentary Cheque passes were issued by the then Minister of State for Railways (independent charge) in the previous Government.

The issue of Complimentary card passes under the discretionary powers has now been completely stopped. No new Complimentary Card Pass has been issued under the discretionary powers of the Minister of Railways. However, a few Complimentary Cheque Passes for single to and fro journey have been issued by the Railway Board mostly for the volunteers proceeding to Orissa for relief work in the context of devastation caused by the super cyclone.

Jalianwalan Bagh Trust

*90. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been planned to make the Jalianwalan Bagh Trust more representative;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is proposed to restore Presidentship of the Trust to the Prime Minister, as was the position heretobefore?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) The question of updating the Jalianwala Bagh Memorial Act, 1951 is under consideration of the Government.

Supply of Defective Sleepers to Railways

*91. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a case of supply of defective wooden sleeprs to the Indian Railways has come to light;